

Jews in the World of 1947

BY NAHUM GOLDMANN

EXCERPTS from a speech delivered before the Seventh Plenary Session of the Canadian Jewish Congress, held at the Mount Royal Hotel, Montreal, Canada, on June 1, 1947. The full text of this speech was printed in the *Congress Weekly*, published by the Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal, Volume 4, No. 9 (September, 1947).

"When a statesman or politician thinks today of Zionism he doesn't think of prophets, idealists, poets. He thinks in very realistic terms—Oil, Jewish state in Palestine, Middle East, Russia, America, and so on." (p. 11)

"People understand very well what it would mean to establish the Jews definitely in Palestine." (p. 11)

"... There are a great many strategists who believe that the most important strategic area in the world is the Middle East . . . They are convinced that if there are any future wars that they will be global wars and they will concentrate on this part of the world. The Middle East, between the three continents, the link between Europe and Asia and Africa, is perhaps the most important strategic area in the world. In one of the

talks I had last summer (1946) with Mr. (Ernest) Bevin where he spoke up very frankly, he said to me,

'You know, doctor, what you want me to do by establishing a Jewish State? You want me to deliver into your hands the keys to the most important strategic area in the world. You will allow me to think once and twice before I give you this key.'

"There was something in this remark. In addition to this, oil has been found in the Middle East. I remember Mr. (Harold) Ickes, who was in charge of oil administration in America during the war, told me that experts report that there is more oil in the Middle East than in all of North and Central America together, ten to 20 times as much. And you know what oil means in this world. Once we have established a Jewish State in Palestine all this will be in our favour. But until we do establish it this is an obstacle, because people are very reluctant to allow Jews, with their zeal and their intelligence, to establish themselves in an area of this importance." (p. 11)

"If we had wanted to establish

Jews on Madagascar we could have done so already. Nobody cares what is being done in Madagascar. It is outside of world politics. But Palestine is today the centre of strategy and of world power politics and statesmen who approach Zionism today think in these terms." (p. 11)

"The matter (Jewish State in Palestine) is now (1947) before the United Nations and this is a great and unique historical opportunity. The United Nations will not convene special sessions for the Jewish

problem year in year out. They will either solve it in a year or so, or they won't solve it. We must see that this unique opportunity should be used now for a final solution of the problem. Any delay in the solution is a catastrophe for the future of a Jewish Palestine, because time does not work for us.

Therefore I regard any solution other than the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine as a catastrophe for us." (p. 11)

(A photostatic copy of all eight pages of the original document by Dr. Goldmann will be sent to those who send Mercury ten or more subscriptions.)

According to the *London Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish Newsletter*, New York City, this same Dr. Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress proposed in Geneva, Switzerland, in August 1958 (where 62 representatives of Jewish organizations from all over the world were gathered) that Israel must observe strict neutrality in the war between the East and West. We quote:

"Dr. Goldmann has now for a number of years *advanced a policy of neutrality for Israel in the Cold War* similar to that followed by most Arab states, a policy which has gained adherents among many liberals and Socialists in and outside of Israel. But instead of discussing this question at the Geneva Conference, Goldmann ruled out all discussion of Israeli problems and *advanced a new theory on the neutrality of the Jewish people as a whole*. According to this theory, Jewish organizations in the Diaspora which speak for Jews as Jews must observe strict neutrality between East and West. *Goldmann went so far as to declare that there is no anti-Semitism against Jews as individuals in Soviet Russia*. As to conditions leading to assimilation, Diaspora Jews, according to Goldmann are not better off in the Western countries than they are in Communist Russia."

The non-Zionist *London Jewish Chronicle* and the *Manchester Guardian*, pointed out the dangers implied in Goldmann's proposal "that a Jewish international organization should arrogate to itself the right to dictate to Jewish communities outside of Israel a foreign policy that is different from the policy of the state or the government of which they are citizens. This would carry Jewish nationalism in the Diaspora to a point that even Zionism never proposed. *It would confirm the charge of the anti-Semites that the Jews everywhere form a nation within a nation* and would increase and intensify the suspicions and realities of double loyalty more than ever."